

EGREMONT GREEN COMMITTEE MEETING DRAFT MINUTES
Jan. 6, 2021

The Jan. 6, 2021, Zoom meeting opened at 4:05.

Members present: Juliette Haas, Emily Eyre (co-chair), Pat Konecky (co-chair), Marj Wexler, Corinna Barnard

Also present: Sharon Waskow

Minutes of the Dec. 9, 2020, with four changes from Juliette, were unanimously accepted.

Sustainability Coordinator Report: Juliette said that Sheffield had contacted all South County towns regarding a kitchen waste-hauling agreement. Sheffield is looking into hiring a hauler to take biodegradable waste to a commercial composting area. Juliette said she encouraged the idea but that since Egremont has a composting system in place, she declined. Marj noted that such a program would handle items such as compostable cutlery that don't work in the Town's composting system because they need the high-heat industrial element to biodegrade. Pat said the idea reminded her of the effort to get local restaurants to collect their biodegradable waste, which currently gets mixed with the trash. Members liked the idea of involving restaurants and Juliette said she would forward the concept to her contact in Sheffield.

Rain Barrel Project: Emily said people who would like to purchase the barrels can do so directly with the GARB. She clarified that the program is not sponsored by the state of Massachusetts, so no financial assistance is available. GARB is now listing Egremont as a community program and residents may place orders. To publicize the program, Emily said Marj has written a press release for The Berkshire Edge, Barbara Kalish will put a notice in the Town newsletter and create a flyer. Marj said her press release will be transformed into a Green Committee column for the Edge. Pat raised the possibility of someone living outside the Town participating in the program. Corinna said that if the program is not strictly limited to Town residents it would be curious since the price

difference between buying individually and through a community program is so considerable. Emily will track down that piece of information before Marj's rain barrel column is submitted to The Edge. Corinna said that as with all columns she will circulate the draft through committee for final review. Pat wondered if, since the purchases are going directly through the company, the idea of creating a fund to help make the barrels more affordable for some residents was still viable. Corinna said her own qualms about pricing and financial assistance were lessened since it was not structured as a state program. Pat said she would forward information about the program to Will Conklin, since he leads Greenagers, which installs gardens, which might benefit from the barrels.

Berkshire Edge Articles: Pat and others expressed interest in re-activating the columns and were glad that Marj's press release would be converted into a column. Corinna said that Emily's email to Town residents about the new collection of RX bottles could also be readily made into a column. So those two can be considered in active stages of production. Pat said she was still interested in the possibilities of a Tool Library in Egremont. Corinna will resume carrying the list of column ideas in the minutes, see below.

- 1) Virtual tool library – about a community effort and sharing in general.
- 2) MRF town materials and the shifts underway locally in the recycling industry.
- 3) BRTA bus routes & South County public transportation.
- 4) Rollout for rebates for EVs are back from state.
- 5) Findings of the National Grid's Green Communities program, begun in 2012. Data from these various certified communities shows the strides possible in reducing electricity consumption (renewables, conservation & efficiency). Biggest challenge is transportation (which could provide a tie-in with No. 3 & No. 4).
- 7) Plastic avoidance in the era of Covid.
- 8) Annual article about the Town's most recent "Waste Line" figures

Committee member volunteer to liaison with green/energy committees around the state and report back to us on interesting initiatives. Pat said the idea had not gotten off the ground due to the extra work

involved for local organizers, but that she still wonders if there is something to pursue here so towns learn from one another. Juliette said that information sharing is going on informally, that she receives steady calls from people in neighboring towns about composting or another Town program. Marj said someone might take a proactive approach in raising Egremont programs. Pat said that Edge articles would be a way to do that.

The meeting ended at approximately 4:45.

The next meeting will be on Wednesday, Feb. 10 at 4pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Corinna Barnard